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WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE CONQUERED ISLANDS?

BY SENATOR JOHN T. MORGAN.

THE war with Spain, into which we have been drawn by a necessity we could not honorably avoid, which is imposed upon our country by a proper sense of humanity and the duty we owe to Christian civilization, is not likely to close without embracing a wider field than the establishment of free government in Cuba alone, and the control of that island by a people with whom we can live in peace and friendship, as near neighbors.

The resistance of Spain to our just demands for peace in Cuba has already lost to her the dominion over the Philippine Islands, and will remove her yoke from the Caroline Islands and from Cuba and Porto Rico. The prospect of this sweeping result, which is not likely to fail of complete accomplishment, brings into earnest, practical discussion the question, that is almost new in our history, as to the disposal that should be made of all these islands at the close of the war. If the United States, at that time, shall have the control of the destiny of these islands, the first view of the question of their disposal requires us to determine whether these islands should be returned to the dominion of the Spanish Crown.

If a revolution in Spain should establish a Republic there, the

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principles of constitutional government which may be adopted by the Spanish people may accord to these islands the full liberty of local self-government, so well secured to them as to remove the tyrannical domination that the Monarchy has employed to crush them with oppressions that no people should be compelled to endure. In such an event, the Republic of Spain might consist of a confederation of sovereign states, such as the States of the American Union, into which the people of the insular countries might freely choose to enter. With "indemnity for the past and security for the future," such a result would gratify the American people.

Spain could have restored peace to Cuba at any time by the declaration of its independence, and could have made with that republic most advantageous treaty arrangements. But the iron hand of the Monarchy refused to relax its grasp upon the power to rule and tax and destroy those people. The haughty pride of the Monarchy refused to bow to duty. Cupidity refused to yield to the pleadings of justice, and the ferocity of brutal power refused to stay its hand, on the demand of humanity.

If a true republic had existed in Spain, animated with respect for human rights and liberties, Cuba would have been set free, and the gratitude of the people for such a deliverance would have drawn them, with great rejoicings, into a Spanish federation of free republics, along with the other colonies in the East and West Indies.

The time has passed when such a federation is possible, and "the pride that goes before a fall" seems still rigid and unrelenting, and is leading Spain into the loss of all her colonial possessions. The United States would have welcomed such a deliverance for these oppressed people, and would have rejoiced in sacrifices for the holy cause of humanity and liberty. But that is now beyond hope. The situation unexpectedly imposes upon the American people a difficult and responsible task, in giving a proper direction to the future of these insular peoples, that are now left in a chaotic condition.

In Cuba, the people have been in close contact with our free, constitutional government, and many of their leading men have been educated in our schools. With such opportunities, they have acquired the capacity for just and enlightened self-government, and, upon that foundation, they have already established their

infant republic amidst the throes of revolution, and have gathered around it in battle array and have sustained it, until it has grown into a power that commands the respect of the world, and will be established as a welcomed member of the family of nations.

Whether Cuba will ever enter into the union of American States, or will prefer to stand apart as a separate republic, will depend upon her free and voluntary election, but its union with our government will never be the result of compulsion. In her freedom there would still be an element of subordination, if Cuba does not possess and exercise the unconstrained right to control her own destiny.

In Porto Rico, the ability to sustain an independent government is more questionable, because her population cannot increase in so limited an area to the strength that is essential to independent statehood. Her geographical position is too important to distant nations, to admit of her separate independence. Unless Cuba and Porto Rico can be united into a republican federation, with advantage to both islands and with the free consent of their people, it is probable that the United States will protect the people of Porto Rico by including the island within the limits of a military outpost, while they will be left free to control their domestic affairs in their local councils. By making the ports of this island free to the commerce of all nations, except as to tonnage duties, or sound dues, no questions would be likely to arise with other countries for settlement that could not be properly disposed of by a commandant of a naval or military station.

The question of greatest difficulty that will be presented for solution by the United States at the close of the war with Spain will be the disposal of the Philippine and the Caroline Islands. In respect of all the islands from which Spanish power is expelled by our arms, there is a proper and necessary reservation, to be made at the proper time, of limited areas that will include certain bays and harbors that are best adapted to the purposes of military outposts, and for coaling stations and places of refuge for our warships and other national vessels.

It would be extreme folly to omit such provision for the security of our ships and the protection of our commerce in both the great oceans. If any of these islands are transferred to any government, local or foreign, such government should be bound by treaty stipulations to guarantee to the United States, against all

comers, and with arms if necessary, the full and uninterrupted possession and control of suitable military reservations. The government of the Philippines, outside of such military reservations, is the weighty problem we must solve in our dealing with this novel situation.

The necessary care of our commercial affairs, and the defense of our coasts, will require the annexation of Hawaii, and the establishment of a naval station in Pango-Pango Bay, in Samoa, where we have this right, by treaty. A military post in the Philippines, connecting with these other islands and with Asia, would form a strategic situation of immense value in time of war, and would place us on an equal footing with all other powers in the control of the commerce of the Southern Pacific Ocean.

The distance of Hawaii from all other places, and its equidistant proximity to all points on our Pacific Coast, from the border of Mexico to the island of Attu, would give us the ascendancy in sea power in the North Pacific, if not the supreme strategic control of that vast ocean area.

It may be considered inappropriate or immodest, even, that a republic should contemplate the possession of naval stations, in those seas where monarchic Europe has laid violent hands on all the islands, but we must respond, in our policies, to the energy with which our institutions have inspired our people in seeking wealth and commercial pursuits. Wheresoever our power may extend beyond our continental boundaries, it will be confined to the protection of the interests of our own people, by establishing such military outposts as will secure to them the full enjoyment of all their rights, and the liberty of commerce. The policy of colonization by conquest, or coercion, is repugnant to our national creed, which places the right of free self-government in supremacy over all other sovereign rights; and a colonial policy which discriminates between the rights of colonists, and those of the people who enjoy full citizenship in the United States, would be repugnant to the principles of our national Constitution.

In all the departments of our government, the laws of nations are adopted and admitted to be in force. They broaden the powers of the government to include whatever is in accordance with those laws. Broadly stated, the United States have as much rightful authority beyond their borders, as may be exerted by any other power.

The limitations on the powers of our departments of government are intended to protect our people and the States against domestic usurpation or wrong, rather than to limit the national government in its dealings with foreign states or countries. The army and navy of the United States are not confined in their operations to the land or the water included in our territorial limits; and they may be used, in accordance with the laws of nations, in time of peace, or in war, to safeguard the rights of our people in any part of the world, when our laws so provide. In time of war, these powers are exercised in enforcing the martial law; and in time of peace, they may be exerted in the form of military government, acting in supervision, but in harmony with civil or municipal laws of the country held under military control. In our military reservations, the military arm is employed as an agency of civil government, and, in the necessary control of Indian tribes, the same principles of government obtain.

It must be conceded, under the laws of nations, and in accordance with the necessary authority of our national sovereignty, that we may lawfully govern the Philippine Islands, or any part of them that may come rightfully under our control as a result of war, by military authority, if we find it necessary for the welfare of those people, or our own, so to govern them. In such an event, we should first set apart a special reservation of territory, under permanent military government, and fortify it as a naval station, giving to the people in such reservations the rights of citizenship of the United States, if they choose to accept them.

The question of the capacity of the people of the Philippine Islands to become a free and self-governing people can only be solved through the friendly offices of the United States, or of some just and liberal government, to direct and assist them in that course of development. It is too early now to venture upon a solution of the obvious difficulties that must attend their growth into a self-governing people, by any definite plan of procedure; but the example of Hawaii gives great encouragement to the philanthropist and the Christian who may look hopefully to the future of these people. When they are brought into living contact with the beneficent influences that have redeemed them from servile bondage to their oppressors and have elevated them to the possibilities of a true and enlightened civilization, they will accept the new situation cheerfully.

Among the people in the Philippines, who belong to the subject races, the native Malays are the class who possess the greatest governing power. They comprise the rebel element who have had the fortitude to resist the oppressions of Spanish rule. They have a feeling of racial autonomy and self-reliance, and a strong desire for independence, as well as an indignant resentment towards their oppressors. The history of their wrongs and sufferings, during a long period of oppression, is far more aggravated than that of the Cubans. Their oppressors are strangers to them in blood and language, and are strangers to human sympathy, or forbearance, in their treatment of the Malays.

In mental endowments, and in physical stature and strength, the native people of these islands are by no means an inferior class. They are quite the equals of the Japanese, in natural powers; and, like the Hawaiians, to whom they bear a strong racial resemblance, they are of gentle disposition. They are fond of social enjoyments, such as music and singing, in which they have great skill, and are fond of agricultural pursuits, in which they excel. That such a people have fought the Spanish so bravely and for so many years is a proof of their virtue, as a race, which gives strong assurance that, under just government, they will grow into a strong, useful and happy nation. Of the ten or twelve hundred islands that constitute this great archipelago, only a few have been explored by white men.

Since the earliest Spanish occupancy, which has only been a thin fringe about the coasts and harbors, the natives in the interior have lived in constant rebellion towards the foreign usurpers. They have had no government which they willingly recognized, and little hope of any form of union; and their separation into groups, corresponding with the insular divisions of their country, has excited local jealousies and has estranged them from each other; and, like our Indian tribes, they have had many internecine wars. Like the Hawaiians, until they were subjugated by a great chieftain, Kamehameha I., the inhabitants of each island have been strongly addicted to warfare against the others. If they had a government that commanded their honest allegiance, they would become united, as the Hawaiians are; and, upon the basis of that union, would be laid the foundations of a free constitutional government, like the Republic of Hawaii, than which there is no better government in the world.

It is not aside from the line of just reasoning and deduction, nor is it a mere conjecture, to attribute to the freedom of religion, or to expect from the labors of the American missionary, an influence in the regeneration of the Philippines, that was the most efficient cause of the elevation of the Hawaiians to the dignity of a self-governing and educated Christian people. The same conditions will assuredly bring about like results in the Philippines.

The government of the United States took no active part in promoting the regeneration of Hawaii, and it will not inaugurate or support a propaganda in the Philippines, either political or religious; but it should not deny to itself the right to give its encouragement to good government in those islands, or to give to those people proper support against the unjust invasion of their rights by foreign powers. The fortunes of war have devolved this duty upon us.

Annexation will not be a necessary or proper result of such moral or actual protection, because the United States is an American power, with high national duties that are, in every sense, American; and the Philippines are not within the sphere of American political influence, but are Asiatic, and should remain Asiatic.

All the American States are Christian, and, in nearly all of them, the political relations are dissolved between the Church and the State, so that religion is free and untrammelled. In the Eastern Hemisphere, the reverse condition has always been a source of discord that is apparently ineradicable. Freedom of religious opinion and conduct, under proper regulation, is an essential element in a true republic. Until this impediment is removed, which cannot be done by mere political agencies, a republic like ours would find a barrier to the annexation of European or Asiatic countries, which we could not attempt to surmount without danger to our own government. All the American States being Christian, and nearly all of them republican, it would be an uncongenial and dangerous situation if any of them should annex foreign territory having a people in authority who are antagonistic to both of these vital conditions.

The spread of republican institutions over new fields of endeavor must be a growth of reformation that is nurtured by the people concerned, and not a reformation by coercion that comes from the outside, and is supported by propagandists only. We have no justifiable motive, nor any compelling necessity for in-

cluding the Philippines, or the Caroline Islands, within our territorial limits, unless that is the only feasible way of saving those people from destruction ; or, unless those islands become indispensable to our national safety.

The United States cannot accept the surrender of the Philippines from Spain, and then consent that they shall be restored to the Spanish Crown, under any conditions. The people of the United States are not inimical to Spanish people. The history of the Latin states of America is full of proofs that we have towards Spaniards a sincere sentiment of respect and regard. It is the Bourbon rule in Spain that has incurred the hostility of the American people. The reason for this displeasure was developed in the early days of the republic, through the wrongs inflicted by the Spanish dynasty, first upon the native people, and then upon all except the favored subjects of the Crown, in the Spanish-American colonies.

Through long forbearance, and the silent toleration of these wrongs by the United States, Spain has presumed upon our pacific intentions until we have been forced to demand the reign of peace and humanity in Cuba, as it was demanded by all the other Spanish Colonies in the first quarter of this century. It was not until the atrocities of the Monarchy had culminated in the extermination of the natives by starvation and rapine, and had included citizens of the United States in the terrible "*bando*," now and hereafter to be described as Weyerism ; and not until after our courtesy and benevolence were rewarded with the criminal destruction of the "*Maine*," that the United States asserted the common rights of humanity, and our national right to be rid of such a neighbor as the Spanish government in Cuba.

When the occasion has passed, and Cuba has been freed from the Monarchy, all Americans will welcome her people into the sisterhood of American States. That immense benefits will come to all the people of America by opening a new area to the blessing of free constitutional government, extending through all the Spanish possessions from Porto Rico to the Philippines, there can be no doubt; and this result will be the crowning glory of the war that is being waged with the most humane motives, and for the noblest purposes that ever inspired the action of a great nation.

We cannot honorably relax our efforts until this grand result is accomplished, and we have the just right to the enjoyment of

the increased commercial advantages that we will share, under fair competition, with the world.

It is a new and inviting field for American enterprise and influence that opens Porto Rico, Cuba, the Isthmian Canal, Hawaii, the Caroline and the Philippine Islands to fair trade and good government; and we shall need only the good will of those people to secure to us a just participation in its advantages.

This is an alluring field for conquest and dominion, but no compulsion will be needed to hold it, beyond the temporary necessity of preserving the peace in these islands, until the rightful government of their people can be established on safe foundations. Conquest would dishonor our motives in waging war against Spain, if we should hold the subjugated islands only in trust for ourselves. Civilized and humane people throughout the world, and all the great powers, must, in justice, accord to the United States the most honorable sentiments and purposes in declaring war against Spain.

Other nations have no ground for interference that can relate to the causes of the war; and, so long as it is conducted in accordance with the laws of nations, their right of intervention can only be excused upon motives of compassion for the weaker combatant.

The United States will be the first to discern a situation that appeals to their forbearance. They do not ask other powers for assistance in a war that concerns their own sense of duty; and, in its prosecution, they will reckon only with the enemy, without consulting the ambitious purposes of any other power. It is the earnest desire and hope of the people and the government of the United States that, in this war, we shall never be required to send a fleet or an army to the coast of Spain.

When Spanish dominion is ended in the colonies that have been persecuted by the Spanish Crown, and the successor government has been rightfully established, the great purpose of this war will be accomplished; and Spain will be a wiser and happier nation for the reaction upon her domestic institutions, which will result in the reformation of her home government.

A country that cannot govern its colonies, so as to secure their peace and promote their prosperity, cannot be wronged, if it is compelled to relinquish its authority over them.

JOHN T. MORGAN.